(b) whether the new scheme will cover the risks of all field crops of all farmers against all risk;

(c) whether the scheme will be compulsory or optional and the fixed or variable rates of premium that will be charged;

(d) whether Government propose to subsidize the scheme; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (c) The Government propose to introduce a Pilot Crop Insurance Scheme (PCIS) in the country. The proposal includes charging of actuarial rates of premia; coverage of all farmers and crops (except fruits); compulsory coverage for loanee and optional for non-loanee farmers; insurance coverage in the event of natural calamities like drought, flood, hailstorm and frost and is proposed to be implemented in one district of each State/U.T.

(d) and (e) The Government does not propose any element of subsidy under the scheme.

Revival of Agricultural Aviation Wing

133. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to revive the Agricultural Aviation Wing to improve locust control and pesticide spray capability;

(b) if so, since when the Agricultural Aviation Wing was wound up;

(c) the reasons for which it was wound up earlier;

(d) whether the proposed wing has got any specialised equipments for spray etc.; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Due to prolonged recession in locust activity from early 60's and administrative reasons, it was transferred under the administrative control of Ministry of Civil Aviation & Tourism in May, 1987 and subsequently to Vayudoot Ltd., in January, 1988.

(d) and (e) Agricultural aircrafts are usually fitted with 'Micronair' and other special attachments for ultra low volume and Low Volume Sprays.

Report Concerning Deaths due to Malnutrition of Vidarbha Adivasis

134. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Times of India of 25th September, 1993 under the captioned "Malnutrition Hits Vidarbha Adivasis-hundreds of children dying";

(b) if so, whether Government have since verified the report and the situation prevailing in Vidarbha; if so, the details thereof and what steps have since been taken to provide relief to the victims; and

(c) whether similar tragedies had struck the area in 1989 and 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of Maharashtra has reported that it is true that a number of children died in the area for reasons such as malnutrition, low resistance to infectious diseases etc. The steps taken by the State Government include strengthening the supplementary nutrition programme, deployment of special medical squads etc.

(c) No such tragedy was noticed in the years 1989-90 and 1990-91.